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IN THE TIME
OF
MATTHIAS BRAKELEY,
(1730-1796)
OF LOPATCONG.

WHITE.

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BY
GEORGE BRAKELEY WHITE

"I do not mind to die, you may kill me, no fight but peace!"

And then when what they do to me, he'll know, he'll know, he'll know!

When I'm dead, you'll be rotten meat, you'll be rotten meat, you'll be rotten meat!

So I'll be a good man, and I'll be a good man, and I'll be a good man!

For the first time in the history of the world.

NEW YORK, 1896.

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Woe. In the charmed circle before the blazing hearth, I have lived in that Olden Time. Full well I know that here is a favourite haunt of fairy sprite. Mad Jack Brakely loves these shadowy precincts. The dim figure of the Gray Witch is seen flitting by. I hear, borne on the night blast, the ribald merriment of the Pirate Crew.

Age of easy faith and honest, God-fearing folk! In my early boyhood, the storyteller spoke of this foretime in Lopatcong, and I listened rapt, bathing in its legends and stirring past. For me, indeed, I confess that these simple fireside tales have lent to the history of this region an uncounted fascination and invested it with a glamour of romance.

G. B. W.

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IN THE TIME
MATTHIAS BRAKELEY (1731-1792)
OF LOPATCONG

I.

THE FAST-MINNE-SINGER

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WITH the Olden Time still so strong, it is not surprising that the
early generation and the later still lived on the latter end of the
18th c. The most notable, perhaps, was John Brainerd, who was
truly a great heart, learning and reverence for the custom and the
teachings of the Father, and he was the opposite to the generation
won my love and admiration. With me, the latter end of the 18th c.
was the generation of the early 19th c. It was a time of great
change, the day of the great change, the day of the great change.

The mantle of wisdom Master Brainerd passed on to his
disciples. The next generation, the generation of Mr. Brainerd,
was not so good, but perhaps he was good in what he was good
in, and in the time of the Olden Time. He was a good man, a
Klump of the good Olden Time, of the good Olden Time, of the
good Olden Time. In the time of the good Olden Time, of the
good Olden Time, of the good Olden Time, of the good Olden Time,
that he did young, and old, and in the time of the good Olden Time,
of the good Olden Time, of the good Olden Time, of the good Olden Time,
of the good Olden Time, of the good Olden Time, of the good Olden Time,
of the good Olden Time, of the good Olden Time, of the good Olden Time,

THE LITTLE BARBARA

The good verdant into the woods and fields,
The old yew April rains and flowers —
Forsythia cat the merry bird
The cent and fan the opening flowers.

Barbara loves the soft night flowers,
Nurtured in the foxglove beds,
Barbara knows the red-shed flowers
Wildwood daffodils in foxglove beds.

Here is our meet and trying place,
Here I weave and learn my fate,
The old birds sing a merrimental —
Amorous bird that is not yet mate.

Sometimes 'tis sunshine overhead,
Sometimes the blue is overcast,
The moonlight is warm on the trees,
Sunlight and shadow — neither hot
Baked in the mist of early spring,
Barbara's brown, old April showery,
Each speeded soon apace away,
Barbara's smile, old April boy's

My grandfather never forgave his perfidy and the lightness with which he was wont to speak of the far sex. She always insisted that he was no minnesinger at all, but an idle younger son of the family who would have been much better employed as plowing such fine weather than verse-making.

Mr. Brakeley himself was a delightful *raconteur*, and in his narrative old age, when the manners and customs of the Fathers began to pass away, he loved to relate traditions of the foretime and reminiscences of his own youthful life.

Rodney, too, had learned something of the storyteller's art from his mother. He was such a true believer in "spooks and witches" that after Mr. Brakeley's death, he usually made him the authority for his most remarkable tales, which embellished by his exuberant fancy were sadly in need of a proleptic. To any doubts propounded, he invariably answered, "Massa Brakeley said so." But it was, indeed, a new and alarming sign of the times, omens of evil days to come, when the minnesinger's luth began to be questioned and the old legends lost their hold upon the popular imagination.

it transpired that the object of the minnesinger's mission and the aim of this unwonted activity amongst the Germans was to inaugurate a series of grand entertainments in the style of the Olden Time. It was decided that the first should be a Circle-Hunt, and the meet was appointed to take place on the Brakeley estate. The Scotch-Irish watched with no little curiosity the goodly throng of young and old, attired in the quaint costumes of former times, who gathered there early one October morning to participate in the revels. Conrad Swinger was radiant. He discoursed with his fiddle the most stirring strains of musick. The hunters examined carefully the flint-locks of their guns. The woman folk busied themselves with preparations for the supper which would conclude the day's sport. But first the minnesinger delivered a brief allocution describing the famous circle-hunt which took place in the glorious foretime.

The hunters separated widely, and the whole valley was soon encircled with a cordon of armed men. They then gradually advanced to a given point and shouted and halloed with all their strength, that the game large and small might be surrounded in a smaller space as the circle narrowed. Conrad Swinger hastened along, encouraging all. He had caught glimpses of bear and deer and wild turkey within the rapidly contracting line. The excitement grew apace.

But how delusive oftentimes are our most sanguine expectations! The hunters were chagrined to find that the magical circle contained no other game than—a sow and litter of pigs! The banquet was eaten in silence and each went his way. Such was the melancholy end of the last Circle-Hunt in Lopatcong.

This undignified *jeu de* furnished the Scotch-Irish with numberless jokes at the expense of their German neighbours. Young Mr. Brakeley was sensible of the ridicule provoked by his vain attempt to habit the present in antique garb. He acquiesced perforce in the result and laid aside his tricorn and short-clothes. The Old and the New, as typified in the two nationalities, had met in mortal strife and the day was lost.

Pathetic, indeed, was the minnesinger's lamentation over the decadence of the good old times and of the manners and customs of the German forefathers in Lopatcong. The younger generation no longer listened with rapt attention to his tale; his lays no longer awakened the whilom enthusiasm. 'Poor old Conrad Swinger! Mournful relic of an age and people that pass away!'

NOTHING BUT THE TRUTH

THE JESUIT MISSION

In the early centuries of the discovery and settlement of the New World there were no more self-devoted and efficient instruments of civilization than the Jesuit missionaries who sought to convert and subdue savage nations by the gentler arts of peace. Their influence was widespread in this northern region and their zeal and craft enabled them to acquire unbounded sway over the untutored Indians who ever spoke of them with respect and admiration. The *Lettres-Edifiantes* are an interesting account of aboriginal manners and customs and a noble monument of their abundant success.

Sometime posterior to the year 1683, a company of French Jesuits established a mission in the valley. The Brakeley family had departed thence, with the exception of Mad Jack, who dwelt alone in the old manor-house. The good fathers selected an eligible site and with the aid of their Indian converts constructed of hewn logs a chapel and school. Here they remained a few years,—how long is unknown. Certainly they were gone in 1705, when George Brakeley (1687–1730) arrived in Lopatcong.

A theme so romantic and rich in exciting incident as the Jesuit Mission was not neglected by the storyteller of the Olden Time, and many were the tales relating to this event narrated at the fireside. Matthias Brakeley (1730–1790) was deeply interested in the particulars of their residence in Lopatcong. He listened to the received traditions and questioned the Indians, and sought to eliminate the fabulous from the real; but only meagre facts, embellished by the old legends, rewarded his labours.

One of the ancient landmarks of Lopatcong which has disappeared since the time when Mr Brakeley pursued so eagerly his antiquarian researches was a rambling, moss-grown, goblin-haunted pile standing by the Turnpike road and near where the Straw Church was afterwards erected. Authentick traditions spoke of this crumbling relic as the Mission-House of the Jesuits and told a strange story of the forgotten past. After their departure it remained a long time unoccupied,—tenanted only by ghostly visitants of whom passers by obtained an occasional glimpse.

In the ruinous Mission-House, it was popularly supposed, were secret chambers and subterranean passages, but Mr Brakeley by the most indefatigable search could discover none. Yet, withal, something mysterious
and

extremely doubtful if he ever did as dearly as he loved the cup that inebriates.

Mr. Brakeley viewed with much displeasure the proposed desecration, as he termed it. He was loth, he confest, to give up the associations connected with the old Mission.

The place was known thenceforth as the Straw Tavern. The new proprietor was naturally regarded with considerable suspicion in the neighbourhood and folk eyed him askance as he appeared in their midst at church. The evil reputation of his house, as haunted by the goblin Jesuits, kept many away and his custom at first was extremely small. But during the war of the Revolution, it was a popular and well-patronized hostelry; and at the sign of the Sheaf of Wheat, loyalist and patriot have found good-cheer, for mine host made no distinction provided the reckoning was promptly paid.

A gleam of the supernatural, awed them into silence, and they stood regarding motionlessly the movement of the intruder. He advanced to the board without speaking and seizing the flagon of liquor held it aloft before the bright light of the fire.

"Drink!" cried the rejoicing soldiery, delighted at this convivial sight in their strange guest, and with a maudlin shout, they raised full cups to their lips, "drink, it is Forgiveness!"

But the Intruder turned abruptly, and as his stern glance met the company the cups fell untasted from their lips and a painful silence ensued, broken only by the fierce wail of the storm and the crackling of the logs in the fireplace. A smile played upon his features as he again uplifted the flagon and poured the contents to the last drop upon the hearthstone. A stifling vapour arose from the burning liquid, filling the apartment with its deadly fumes.

The storm abated and the morrow broke clear and cold. The deep snow had wellnigh covered the old ruin with a winding-sheet,—sepulchre and cold! All was silent within save the wintry blast which whistled through the chinks in the logs. The fire on the hearth had burned out. The remains of the saturnalia were strewn around—the empty flagon and the half-filled cups. And the Revelers, lifeless and cold, lay stretched upon the bare floor of the charnel-house.

in a small strong-box from time to time on private inspection. More than an hundred and fifty years after the events narrated above, my great-great-grandfather, Matthias Brakeley (173-1794), saw this legendary personage and caught a glimpse of his ill-gotten gold.

MY GRANDFATHER'S ADVENTURE.

One October day in the last century, Mr. Brakeley, accompanied by his servant Rodney, had been hunting in the neighborhood of Phals' Point; and night coming on and the distance from home being considerable, they prepared to encamp. This plan had been adopted with great opposition on the part of the superstitious negro. The evil reputation of the place as a favorite resort of goblins was enough to condemn it, and he urged in vain that they quit so dangerous a locality.

It was a matter of some satisfaction to Rodney, as he reflected upon the foolhardy conduct of his master, that the camp lay on the opposite side of the river, rather north of the Point. A supper of game was partaken of and preparations made for the night's rest; but as he confessed afterward to his friend Jack, he was too nervous to sleep and kept anxious guard. Toward midnight his vigil was rewarded by seeing a light made by a pitch pine torch move around and up and down the other bank in a most suspicious manner. It seemed to be carried by a person in search of something, and doubtless by one of that pestilent crew of pirates! Hastily arousing Mr. Brakeley, he acquainted him with his alarming discovery. Sure enough, there was a little, burly old man in a strange and antique garb, standing upon a broad, flat stone by the water's edge, immediately below the Point, and intently examining the pebbly bottom with his flaming light. The terror-stricken negro prepared for precipitate flight, but his master insisted that they remain to watch the movements of the old pirate.

"An' you'n't yo' afraid to stay ther, Roddy?" inquired Jack, when the story was told him years afterwards.

"Yes, I can an' get any disagreeable sensations," replied Rodney. "Mr. Brakeley, ez I sayd, ez 'fraid o' 'em, an' he come a-carryin' me a-hikin' an' a-beatin' hard!" He was frequently inclined to mete out corporal punishment on his master, by way of keeping him out of harm.

Hans

THE LEGEND OF CALINTO.

Below the Fool Rift—a wild and dangerous spot—the river Delaware eddies and widens into a beautiful lake-like expanse. Cottonwood and maple trees grow luxuriantly on its banks, and beyond the fringe of forest the country stretches away in fruitful fields and verdant pastures. On the sunny side of this picturesque water, lived a lonely old man named O'Mally, about the time of the French and Indian War. It was an humble dwelling he had built for himself here, rudely constructed of logs and thatched with straw, and he cultivated a small patch of ground hard by, which with hunting and fishing afforded him a livelihood. In my boyhood a rambling old house, with broad porches two stories high and a great brick chimney, stood on the former site of this cabin.

Many dark stories were rife about O'Mally. He was said by some to be an ex-plate and by others an ex-convict who had escaped hither from the old country. Whether these accusations had any foundation in fact or not, the few settlers who were dispersed over this region in those early days did not regard his society as desirable and carefully avoided him, which apparently was just what he wanted.

After living here a long time alone, he disappeared suddenly. It was supposed that he had quit the place permanently and his neighbours felt no little relief to be rid of one whom they could not help looking upon with suspicion. He was absent several months, and then very much to their surprise and disgust returned to dwell in their midst again. He brought back with him a little girl with fair, curling hair and bright blue eyes. His love for the child seemed to pass all bounds, and they were always seen together. Thus she grew up into beautiful girlhood.

Several young men living across the river in the vicinity of O'Mally's cabin had been disposed at first to pay attentions to his daughter, as she was commonly called, but an hostile demonstration on the part of the old man brought these courtships in each case to a premature and undignified close. He was not desirous, evidently, that the girl should enter into wedlock, and his wishes in the matter soon became known and respected.

The objections of O'Mally seemed a bar to obtaining the hand of his daughter to all save Calinto, the son of the chief Philip. This youthful Indian was exceedingly handsome, intelligent and of amiable disposition. Although still quite young, he was well known and much respected by the settlers in the neighbourhood and was a frequent and welcome guest at their

THE LEGEND OF THE GRAY WITCH.

On a gentle declivity of the mountain, looking down into the valley anent the manor of Brakeley, stood a rude log cabin late in the last century. It has disappeared long ago, and the adjoining close has grown wild, but a mournful tradition preserves from oblivion the memory of the last unhappy occupant. My great-aunt pointed out to me the site of this former habitation.

An hardy pioneer and trapper made the clearing in the woods and built the cabin. He is said to have met a violent death afterwards in an affray with Indians, and the lonesome dwelling remained a long time untenanted. Strange sights had been seen and strange sounds heard hereabouts, and folk in those superstitious times regarded the locality as haunted.

A few years passed away, and an unknown woman took up her abode in this out-of-the-way place. She was middle-aged, of commanding stature, with dark hair and piercing black eyes, and still retained the traces of youthful beauty. She knew nobody and nobody knew her, or whence she came. She never appeared at church, nor mingled with the people. The minister had visited her and endeavored to incline her to attend on the word of God, but she rebuffed him, and gave no heed to his counsel. The small world of Lapateong came to regard her as a witch and in league with the devil, and shunned her accordingly. She was always attired in plain gray, which, with her singular behaviour, obtained for her the opprobrious name of the Gray Witch.

The shadow of this dark and mysterious woman rested on the valley. She was seen abroad seldom, and then, as she strode nonchalantly along, the little children playing by the roadside fled in dismay before her. Was it simply the impenetrable veil which hid her life from common view that produced so much terror? Perhaps so; yet observing folk remarked that her appearance usually portended some dire calamity. Before every death which took place in the community the Gray Witch had been seen to pass by, as if in warning. Dread messenger!

The minister felt it was incumbent upon him to make yet another attempt to solve the mystery which enveloped the strange woman, and one pleasant afternoon in summer time he wended his way slowly and thoughtfully towards her humble abode. An air of neatness and cleanliness, although

The singular character and tragick fate of the Gray Witch left a deep and painful impression on the community. Mr. Brakeley, who was one of the party accompanying the minister on that terrible winter night, was wont to relate the incident in after years, and he felt that hidden in the mystery of her identity was an heart-history which the world would have been wiser and better to have known.

Mr. Brakeley and his servant would have fled, but the sprite—he seen, and well-disposed—signified that they should tarry and resume the task. For they strove! And the massive chest, filled no doubt to the brim with gold, appeared at the surface of the lake. One more effort would land it safely upon the bank. Suddenly, the spook advanced and himself laid hold of the chain. It snapped asunder, and the treasure with a loud splash disappeared in the waters. Then how he laughed and cruelly mocked them!

It was several days before the treasure-seekers durst return. Still visible upon the lake bank were the marks of the arduous struggle and of their precipitate flight; but the treasure they sought was locked in the bottom of the deep waters.

"We feared, Mistress Gretchel, that we should not see you here this Lord's day," said the pastor, kindly greeting his venerable parishioner.

"Ah, Grandmother Gretchel," spoke Matthias Brakeley affectionately, "I give thanks that thou mayest be with us yet awhile."

"Son, I shall be here yet many a day," replied Granny Gretchel. "Wrong shall be made right!" She waved her staff aloft and her eyes gleamed. "Alack-a-day, you will not live to see it, but I shall."

Some of the young men might have smiled compassionately, but something in her weird appearance impressed them and imposed silence. And all entered the stered office.

The seasons come and go in Lopateong—spring-time and harvest and cold, bleak winter. Granny Gretchel still lived, but by reason of her many infirmities she was unable to attend any longer at the Straw Church. Still she muttered to herself in her hours of reverie, "Wrong shall be made right and the Brakeleys will come into their own." The old theme! Would her prophecy ever come true? Yes, she would answer, I shall live to see it!

In the year 1805, George Brakeley (1763-1833), the last male representative of his ancient family, returned to Lopateong and repurchased a part of his ancestral acres. The occasion was a joyful one to such of the old German families as yet resided in the valley, and according to a time-honoured custom, a large company assembled to witness the execution of the papers and partake of the feast which would follow.

"Alas, that Granny Gretchel should be absent," remarked one of the guests.

"Wouldst thou expect," asked his neighbour, "that, bedridden these twenty years, she could now come hither? But attend, the magistrate reads the deeds."

At this self-same moment, there was a loud rap at the door. Before the assembled company could recover from their surprise, it flew open and Granny Gretchel entered. Folk were awestricken, for there was something preternatural in the appearance of the venerable dame who stood before them. Her whole frame quivered with emotion and her eyes gleamed with fulness of joy.

She waved her staff aloft.

"I have lived," she cried tremulously, "to see wrong made right and the Brakeleys come into their own!" But the excitement was too much. She tottered and would have fallen to the floor had not Mr. Brakeley caught

PATRIOT OR LOYALIST?

The attitude of the Germans of Lopatcong in the war of the Revolution has been a matter of controversy. From my own researches I am convinced that generally speaking they took no active part in the long and bitter conflict. Their isolation from the great world and their hostility to the Scotch-Irish faction, who vociferously espoused the Patriot cause, contributed to this result, whilst their uprightness and traditional friendship for the Lenni-Lenapes led both combatants to respect their neutrality and to offer them no molestation.

Mr. Brakeley's influence was felt for good in the little community. His probity, sympathetic nature and courteous demeanour gained him the confidence of friend and foe. By respecting others' rights he taught them to respect his own,—a favourite maxim with him.

"He must have known Gen. Maxwell and Capt. Anderson, and the tory Lieut. Moody?" I once asked my great-aunt.

"Yes, child," she replied. "Indeed, on one occasion he gave protection to Moody,—an act of kindness which the spy had an opportunity afterwards to return."

She put aside her knitting and seated herself in the settle by the fire. Rare and delightful companion "in winter's tedious night"! She possessed the pleasing art of relating the events and traditions of the good old times; she was the last of the storytellers in Lopatcong.

I stir the smouldering embers in the fireplace and they burst into flames. The past was not dead.

MY GREAT-AUNT'S TALE.

One stormy winter night, whilst the Patriot army lay encamped at Morristown, a stranger knocked at the door of Mr. Brakeley's house and entreated entertainment for himself and his horse. He was wet, cold and hungry—a sufficient claim to the master's hospitality.

The stranger guest was tall and powerfully built and of pleasing address. Mr. Brakeley was charmed with his conversation, impressing him as that of a remarkable man. As they sat before the fire, he would fain have learned something of his history; but to his inquiries, he replied evasively.

At a lonesome part of the road, winding through the woods, he was waylaid by three men who seized his horse by the bridle and bade him dismount and surrender the animal. The answer was a sharp blow with his riding-whip which felled the foremost to the ground. His companions opened a fusilade on the traveller, which was at once returned from across the road by a man, who, unobserved, had witnessed the assault.

The miscreants immediately decamped, and the stranger coming forward accompanied Mr. Brakeley a short distance, whose thanks for his timely assistance he briefly acknowledged and seemed indisposed to converse further. After going several miles, he stopped and turned to leave. As he raised his hat courteously, the moonlight fell upon his countenance and the traveller recognized his whilom guest, Lieut. Moody, the famous tory spy.¹

OLD

¹ In the library of the old Brakeley House, Cambridge is a rare little volume, *THE HISTORY AND DESCRIPTION OF THE TOWN AND PARISH OF CAMBRIDGE*, by JOHN BULLOCK, 1782. It is a fine copy, and beautifully bound by Bedford, — perhaps a gift from the author.

III

OLD CUSTOMS AND SUPERSTITIONS

THE BELIEF IN WITCHCRAFT WAS UNIVERSAL AMONG THE INDIANS OF THE NORTH-
WEST, AND IN THE OLDEN TIME.

THE belief in witchcraft was universal among the Indians of the Northwest long in the Olden Time. And if, perhaps, it is a little less so in that favoured locality an hundred years ago, it could be scarcely necessary for me to advise you that a witch is an inviolable being who dwells in the air bestride a broom-stick.

To bewitch persons or animals they were obliged to bewitch the earth. It was believed that magical arts could not be performed without stepping on a nail or horse's hoof. And therefore, in order to bewitch the people of the tribe, the Indians held it was customary to nail an iron shoe to the ground. In former times there was not a dwelling in the Northwest which was not secured in this manner.

The knots found in coasts, many of them of the same size, were believed to mount a craft in the night and ride until it was morning, when it returned home. It was no uncommon occurrence to see a canoe or a person, or even the party alone, to die on the condition of the natives, and which was often ridden by the witch.

If a witch came on the ocean, the Indians were obliged to shoot at her with a red-hot poker, when they were seen.

It was a common saying that if you wished to know the future, you should bury a looking-glass under the tail of a rook, then sit down and wait long. If you do not speak to them, money can be found there.

THE INDIANS OF THE NORTH-WEST BELIEVED IN THE FOLLOWING:

1. The belief in witchcraft.
2. The belief in the power of the sun.
3. The belief in the power of the moon.
4. The belief in the power of the stars.
5. The belief in the power of the planets.
6. The belief in the power of the elements.
7. The belief in the power of the seasons.
8. The belief in the power of the winds.
9. The belief in the power of the clouds.
10. The belief in the power of the rain.
11. The belief in the power of the snow.
12. The belief in the power of the ice.
13. The belief in the power of the fire.
14. The belief in the power of the water.
15. The belief in the power of the earth.
16. The belief in the power of the air.
17. The belief in the power of the sky.
18. The belief in the power of the sea.
19. The belief in the power of the land.
20. The belief in the power of the world.

I remember hearing an old gossip of the valley relate the following instance of the devilish arts of the witch :

I once had occasion, being a young girl, to look for the cows which had strayed off to the woods. In my search, I passed by the cottage of a woman who was reputed in the neighbourhood to be in league with the devil. She was sitting before her spinning-wheel, and at that very moment was whittling a small stick, making one end sharp and the other blunt. To my inquiries, she replied (without looking up and with a sinister smile) that she had not seen the cows. I went my way, but when I found them and tried to milk them, out did pop the plug of wood which I saw the witch make.

It was an exceedingly difficult, not to say dangerous, undertaking to kill a witch ; yet Mr. Brakeley explains how it can be done easiest :

Make a fair likeness of the witch whose death is compass'd. Then load a gun with a silver bullet and shoot the pourtraiture. But if the witch is already dead, the ball will return and kill the person who aimed the gun.

Amongst some papers of a former generation, I find this curious record of the witchcraft superstition :

A neighbour's wife, who had a child bewitch'd, laid a broom across the door, and of the woman passing in and out she was apprised that the witch would pick it up. Of a surety, the hag did take it up and laid it at one side, for such will never step over a broom. Then a cunning pourtraiture was made of her whom she suspicioned and shot with a silver bullet. The child waxed strong again, but the witch was crippled.

The craft of witchery was handed down, usually by the witch in her last extremity disclosing the dread secret to her chosen successor. In my early boyhood in Lopateong, a strange tale was still current of such transmission :

A number of little imps, tightly enclosed in a box were given by an old witch to a young girl whom she desired should succeed her in the practice of the black art. The gift, however, was not appreciated, but the legatee was perplexed to know what safe disposition to make of it. She consulted Master Berger. By his directions, a fire was kindled in the oven and the box placed therein, securely fastening the door. Soon such unearthly yells and imprecations arose that all the good folk present fled in dismay. After some time, the horrid discord died away. When all was silent again, one bolder than the others cautiously opened the oven-door, but nothing was found except dust and ashes.

When a corpse is limp it is a sign that another death will occur soon in that house.

An horse neighing at a funeral denotes that there will be another burying before long. If a man starts away first it will be a woman, and *vice versa*.

The screech of the owl, issuing at night-time from the forest, was heard with alarm. Its notes are, indeed, somewhat startling. Wilson, the ornithologist, says :

This ghostly watchman has frequently warned me of the approach of morning, sweeping down and around my fires, uttering a loud and sudden " Waugh O! Waugh O!" sufficient to have alarmed a whole garrison. He has other nocturnal solos, one of which very strikingly resembles the half-suppressed scream of a person suffocating or throttled.

There was a superstition that robins will sing near the window when a person is dying. I have heard old folk relate the legend that this bird attended our Lord on the Cross, and was there sprinkled with His blood, the marks of which the little songster still carries on his ruddy breast. Wherefore it was considered sacrilegious to harm one.

The wild swan was not uncommon in those early days, and the autumnal migrations of this bird gave rise to a singular superstition. They usually crossed the valley by night, and in dull, cloudy weather, keeping up a continual calling to each other. It was thought that these mysterious, nocturnal sounds proceeded from a pack of demon dogs, yclept Gabriel's Hounds—evil spirits hounding forward the souls of the damned to eternal punishment. It was a solemn and impressive moment to all, and was dedicated to prayer and supplication for the lost.

Those who have listened to the death-song of the dying swan can never forget its wondrous melody.

Amongst the many superstitions relating to the homely details of farm life may be enumerated the following :

Potatoes planted in the sign of the Lion will grow large, in the sign of the Fish will grow double.

Shingles nailed on the roof when the moon points up will not stay to their place, but will even drop the nail from the lath.

The bottom rail will move and dislodge the fence if laid when the moon points up.

Meat killed in the increase of the moon will increase in weight until the moon becomes full, and vice versa.

7.—She love ;
 8.—Both love ;
 (Here the theme for one—absolving.)
 9.—He comes,
 10.—He tattle ;
 11.—He count ;
 12.—He murre !

A man had better ne'er been born,
 As have his nails on a Sunday shorn.

And to the same effect is an old rhyme :

Cut them on Monday, cut them for health ;
 Cut them on Tuesday, cut them for wealth ;
 Cut them on Wednesday, cut them for news ;
 Cut them on Thursday, for a pair of new shoes ;
 Cut them on Friday, cut them for convey ;
 Cut them on Saturday, so you'll wear them to-morrow ;
 Cut them on Sunday, cut them for evil ;
 For all the week long will be with you the *Prover* !

The sluggard was hardly dealt with by our sturdy and industrious forefathers, and many of their wise saws inveh against slothfulness :

Early to bed, and early to rise,
 Will make a man healthy, wealthy and wise.
 He that will thrive must rise at five ;
 He that has thriven may sleep till seven.
 Drough deep while you're deep,
 And you will have room for ell and leep.
 The more you dig, the more you dig,
 Then plough deep while the iron's hot, deep.
 The more you dig, the more you dig,
 Early to bed, both to rise.

Nature repairs herself,	} Room of sleep
On four tallies seven,	
To me—tallies nine,	
And we'll lie—tallies ten,	

And Mr. Braley, who was habitually an early riser, might have added, with honest old Tusser,

Some work in the morning, as it truly be done,
 But all the day after can be idly be won.

The

The following occurrences were collected in 1971-72:

Female (A) (1971) (1972)	1	1
Female (B) (1971) (1972)	1	1
Female (C) (1971) (1972)	1	1
Female (D) (1971) (1972)	1	1
Female (E) (1971) (1972)	1	1
Female (F) (1971) (1972)	1	1
Female (G) (1971) (1972)	1	1
Female (H) (1971) (1972)	1	1
Female (I) (1971) (1972)	1	1
Female (J) (1971) (1972)	1	1
Female (K) (1971) (1972)	1	1
Female (L) (1971) (1972)	1	1
Female (M) (1971) (1972)	1	1
Female (N) (1971) (1972)	1	1
Female (O) (1971) (1972)	1	1
Female (P) (1971) (1972)	1	1
Female (Q) (1971) (1972)	1	1
Female (R) (1971) (1972)	1	1
Female (S) (1971) (1972)	1	1
Female (T) (1971) (1972)	1	1
Female (U) (1971) (1972)	1	1
Female (V) (1971) (1972)	1	1
Female (W) (1971) (1972)	1	1
Female (X) (1971) (1972)	1	1
Female (Y) (1971) (1972)	1	1
Female (Z) (1971) (1972)	1	1

Some days were estimated more accurately than others. There was (unfortunately) a long time in which our Savoye (1971) (1972) Mr. B. (by quantity observed) that took who have been (1971) (1972) (1971) (1972) commonly work abroad for the first time on the Savoye (1971) (1972).

For the wedding day, I was said,

M. (1971) (1972)
 (1971) (1972)
 W. (1971) (1972)
 (1971) (1972)

It is an unlucky omen for the wedding to be (1971) (1972) day has been fixed, and much more will enjoin the (1971) (1972) at the junction of cross roads or be (1971) (1972) (1971) (1972). It was considered a bad omen if the bride (1971) (1972) the (1971) (1972), but a good omen if (1971) (1972) (1971) (1972) (1971) (1972).

And if on arising she step from her bed upon something higher still, she will from that hour rise in the world. But woe betide her should she fall!

If the bridal party venture off dry land they must go upstream. To look back, or go back before gaining the church door, to marry in green, or whilst there is an open grave in the churchyard, all were considered unfortunate. The bride should be careful in leaving the house and church to put her right foot forward, and to go in at one door and out at another, and to suffer no one to speak to her husband until she has called him by name.

The bride, to be lucky, must wear—

Something old and something new,
Something good and something blue.

When the bridesmaids undress her they must throw away all the pins. Woe to the bride if a single one be left about her,—nothing will go right. Woe to the bridesmaids if they keep one of them, for they will not be married before Whitsuntide, or until the Easter following at the soonest. Maidens, I conjure you, have care!

To break the wedding ring signifies that the wearer will soon be a widow, but—

A year wedding ring wear,
So will we live with our care.

An old rhyme tells of the super-stition attaching to birthdays:

Monday's child is full of merriment,
Tuesday's child is full of sin,
Wednesday's child is full of woe,
Thursday's child has far to go,
Friday's child is loved and sought,
Saturday's child will work for bread,
But the child the seven of the Sabbath day
Is blessed and happy and gay.

Mr. Bradley was a careful observer of atmospheric changes. When in the morning the mist hung about the base of the mountains, he predicted clear weather; but if the mist went up, the rain came down. He notes the following also as signs of rain:

When the morning sun is directly ahead up to 11 A.M. and no rain comes, water comes, water without previous warning.

W:

Across the valley, at the foot of the mountains, lived a little old man who possessed in a rare degree the art of divination. When a well was to be digged his services were invaluable. For a sum of money trifling in comparison to the loss entailed by a wrong location, he would designate the exact spot where water could be found. Of course, it was not to be expected that the seer would explain otherwise than vaguely so remunerative a gift, for which reason Mr. Brakeley regretted that he could give but meagre details of the proceedings. A peach branch was cut carefully—one with three prongs. Then he would trim and anoint it with an unknown liquid from a small vial which he carried with him, muttering the while unintelligibly. At the conclusion of this ceremony, holding the branch loosely in both hands before him, he would advance slowly. Suddenly, at the presence of water in the ground underneath, it was seen to dip in a mysterious manner. The well was located!

My great-aunt remembered the Simple-Room in the old manor-house,—a low-raftered, narrow gallery opening off the great hall and dimly lighted by a small aperture. On one side were long rows of shelves filled with herbs and barks and dried fruits and preserves. Against the wall opposite hung branches of thyme, catnip, etc. Every year, a full supply of these samples were gathered from the woods and fields.

The ground is solid and icy and creeks and swamps are frozen over. The roads, without bridges across the streams, were scarcely more than a passage-way chopped through the forest which covered the face of the land; but the farmer takes advantage of their present excellent condition to convey his produce to market, going sometimes as far as Burlington. On these expeditions, Mr. Brakeley and Rodney would take with them grain, cider and furs to exchange for salt, powder, and manufactured goods. But the latter, being exceedingly dear, were bought sparingly and after much bartering.

Notwithstanding that no farm work could be done, it was yet a busy month. Trapping fur-bearing animals and deer-stalking in the mountains, hauling and chopping the year's supply of firewood and fence material, together with receiving and returning visits in the neighbourhood, occupied fully the day.

Usually about the middle of the month comes a thaw, but if it lasts too long and the weather grows unseasonably warm it forebodes a cold, late spring. Thus old folk were wont to say:

*If the grass grow in January,
It grows the worse for all the year,*

and again:

*If January calends be summerly gay,
'T will be winterly weather till the calends of May.*

The weather, too, was carefully observed on St. Vincent's day, Jan. 22d:

*Remember on St. Vincent's day,
If the sun be seen display,
Be sure to mark the true north beam
Which through the vacuum of aghoon,
For 'tis a token bright and clear,
Of proportion weather all the year,
But if by chance it then should rain,
It will make clear all I need of gain,
And if the cloud and cold be by,
Then more and bolder the year shall be;
If blustering winds do blow about,
Then winter will trouble the land full out.*

Mr. Brakeley was always glad to see plenty of snow in this month, and

On the 10th of Dec. 1779, from a reliable source, I have the following interesting account of the Winter of the year, 1779, 80.

The month of November had been very mild until the night of Wednesd. day, 15th, or 16th, 1779, when the first snow fell to the depth of two inches, which was covered with ice

And in regard to the lengthening of the day at this season :

At New-Year's day a cock's stride,
At Candlemas-day an hour wide,

It was also the belief of the superstitious that on this day the ground-hog came out of his hole, but if he saw his shadow he went back, and there were six weeks more of winter.

MARCH.

March comes in like a lion and goes out like a lamb,
March comes in with an adder's head and goes out with a peacock's tail.
March, many weathers,

Such were the opinions held of old concerning this month in Lopatcong,—season of wind, rain, and sleet! Yet even now the tree is feeling the throbs of the new life to which it is just awakening. Here and there in the forest were large maple groves. The sap is running plentifully, and Mr. Brakeley and Rodney collect the year's supply of syrup and sugar—an important item in the household economy of that olden time.

March winds and April showers
Bring forth May flowers,
So many mists in March you see,
So many frosts in May will be,
March does from April gain
Three days, and they're in rain;
Retain'd by April in bad land,
Three days, and they're in wind,
March wind and May sun
Make clothes white and mads dun,

The roads are in a very muddy condition and wellnigh impassable, as the frost is just leaving the ground. It is hardly possible to take the women folk even a-horseback to the Straw Church Sundays, which sometimes accounts for the small attendance there.

APRIL.

The bee doth love the sweetest flower,
So doth the blossom love the April shower
April flowers bring May flowers,
Sweet as an April mellow,

This

There is a most delightful season in Lapland. The winter is not so great with food and rags. The birds of the air begin to sing, and the trees to leaf. And the season is a jubilee in the world of nature. It is a jubilee for the husbandman. The spring plowing and sowing must be done, and Mr. Brakeley cannot resist the temptation to spend a day abroad in his favourite haunts. "In those vernal seasons of the year, when the air is calm and pleasant, it were an injury and a crime to deny Nature not to go out and see her riches and partake in her richness with heaven and earth." MURDOX.

Yet this sudden transition from winter to summer is attended sometimes with disastrous floods. The snow and ice melt in the spring, and often there is a superabundance of rain, and every rivulet becomes a raging torrent. The rivers are swollen beyond their banks, and cause much destruction. About the year 1754, there was the greatest flood which Mr. Brakeley remembered. It rained continually for nearly a fortnight, and the deep snows of the winter went down devastating water.

At the end of March the snow begins to melt.
At the end of April the snow is gone.
When May begins the weather is fine.
Plowing and sowing is begun.
The weather is fine and clear.
When June begins the weather is fine.

MAY.

The weather is fine and clear.
The weather is fine and clear.

The woods and fields are fresh and verdant, for summer has begun to peep. Sowing and planting the seed is done, the husbandman. It is also the best month of all the year for trout fishing, for which month the Lapsateong stream was famous.

It is a fine month for fishing.
It is a fine month for fishing.
It is a fine month for fishing.
It is a fine month for fishing.
It is a fine month for fishing.

A wet May will fill the mow full of hay,

A swarm of bees in May

Is worth a load of hay ;

A swarm of bees in June,

Is worth a silver spoon ;

A swarm of bees in July,

Is not worth a fly,*

If you look at your corn in May,

You'll come weeping away ;

If you look at the same in June,

You'll come home in another tune.

When the dogwood-blossom turns yellow, it is high time to plant corn, which was the principal crop.

JUNE.

In this month occurs one of the most important epochs of the year. On the morning of the 21st day, the sun reaches his extreme point of Northern declination and inaugurates the Summer Solstice. The great central orb now pours his most intense rays upon the earth and his departing light lingers longest above the horizon. The valley is beautiful and peaceful in these soft summer days. The roses bloom profusely, clambering for support about the eaves of the old manor-house. The fields are white with daisies and other wild flowers, and the air is redolent with their fragrance.

*Calm weather in June
Sets corn in tune.*

The corn is plowed and the grain-fields guarded to prevent the depredations of wild turkeys and pigeons. It may surprise some of my readers to learn how great a pest these wild fowl were in those days. Some of the fields, at a distance from the house, were surrounded by woods, and it was necessary to watch them carefully.

The hay is cut—a very different matter nowadays. A late writer remarks upon the revolution which has taken place in the methods of husbandry during the period of a generation. Scientific discovery and skill in the construction of labor-saving machinery have accomplished greater changes in the haying field than in the workshop.

Not many years ago, haying was the most labourious occupation on farms. It employed not only all the men and boys on the place, but all that could

Find food to eat for what are ready to warm ;

The harvest of now is a crow's worth of home, — Zk. —

JULY.

The Dog-Days begin in this month. Our ancestors supposed that when the dog-star is in conjunction with the sun, the sea boils, wine ferments, dogs go mad and all other animals languish. It is productive in men of boils, phrensies and malignant fevers. Physick should be eschewed at this time and suffer nature to work out her own cure.

The grain is ripe and fit to cut during the forepart of this month, which was done slowly and labouriously with the scythe. But what merry scenes followed! How the good folk of the Olden Time celebrated the decline of the year, and the joyous youths and maidens danced by the light of the moon! This celebration was called the Harvest Home and took place after the crops were safely garnered.

AUGUST.

The harvest is over, but now it is time to clear off new ground and prepare for seeding. The forest rings with the woodman's ax and a loud crash is heard as some giant tree totters and falls. The branches are lopped off, the underbrush gathered in heaps and the earth grubbed and made ready to receive the seed. At this season of the year, vegetation is easily killed and the tree when once cut down is less likely to sprout again. When perfectly dry, the brush is burned, usually by night, and sometimes the whole valley is lighted up with the numerous clearing fires.

SEPTEMBER.

This is the fruit month. Apples are ripe and the grapes growing wild in the woods. The seeding is completed[†] and the corn is cut and shocked before the frost catches it, which is pretty sure to come before the 20th, Michaelmas-day.

The moon of this month is called the Harvest Moon[‡]

OCTOBER.

* Wide, some time this week, if the weather hold clear,

An end of wheat sowing we make for this year;

Remember you, therefore, that I do not nod,

The seed cake, the pasties, and firming the pot, — *Zesset*.

† The Harvest Moon is the full moon which falls on or near the 21st of this month. Its peculiarity is that it rises more closely after sunset for a number of nights after the full than any other full moon in the year. This results in four or five successive nights being almost moonlit, and the opportunity thus given for evening work in harvesting has led to the name of this full moon. The difference between the moon's time of rising on successive nights averages about

$$C = \{C_1, \dots, C_n\}$$

The mountains are gorgeous in their many colored garb. The sharp frosts have dyed the foliage a deep crimson or yellow. The vine growing old, but perhaps at no other season is the valley so beautiful.

Come, boys. The corn must be husked and garnered, although it is pleasant to take a day off to hunt wild turkey, quail, pheasant, and squirrels, which are now plentiful. But after all that, there was no sport to be had to-day in coon-hunting with Rodney. The coon is in prime condition, having lately been making sad havoc in the corn fields, and Mr. Bradley could not have spent whole nights in the chase.

Nuts are ripe and a full supply is gathered for the winter, particularly of walnuts, hickory-nuts and chestnuts. To go a-nutting was a favourite diversion with the young folk.

The moon of this month is called the Hunter's Moon.

NOVEMBER

The days are growing perceptibly hotter. The leaves have fallen and the forest has taken on a dull, leaden hue. The air is raw and chilly, storm-blasted. Winter approaches. It is now that most dangers are approached from forest fires. Mr. Blakeley has seen the mountains glow, and heard and sight—and heard the cracking of the decaying flume in the early before

Great destruction is sometimes wrought—buildings and fences burned and timber destroyed—before it can be quenched. The whole community—men, women and children—turn out to fight the dread monster.

During this month there is a season of mild, soft weather lasting a week, or at most a few days. The atmosphere is hazy but calm. It is the Indian Summer,—summer lingering on the threshold of winter as if loth to depart.

As the wind is in the month of November, so it will be in December.

Thunder in November indicates a fertile year to come.

If there be ice in November, that will bear a duck,
There will be nothing the matter but sleek and much.

If St. Martin's day (November 11th) be cold, fair, and dry, the cold in winter will not be long.

If the geese stand on ice St. Martin's day
They will walk in mud Christmas day.

When in November the water rises, it will show itself the whole winter.

As November 21st so the whole winter.

As St. Catherine's day (November 24th), foul or fair, so will be next February.

As November, so the following March.

If the leaves of the trees and grape vine do not fall before Martin's day, a cold winter must be expected.

DECEMBER.

Winter has come at last! During the past month, it gave frequent admonitions of its approach—frosty nights and light squalls of snow. But here it is in earnest. Gorse and clover are enveloped in a far-reaching, white mantle, and cold winds prevail. The farmer slaughters his swine just as soon now as the moon is right and cures and salts down the meat. The bee-trees which Mr. Brakeley and Rodney found during the summer are cut and the hive pillaged of its hoard of honey. Deer-stalking is in season and many a fine saddle of venison graces the humble board or is taken down the river to exchange for household commodities. The women folk are busy, spinning and weaving. But in the long winter evening, all gather before the glowing hearth to listen to the pleasing fictions of the storyteller.

“December crowns the longest nights of all the year” with a superb picture

* The day decreases in length during December until the 17th of the month, when the sun is at its shortest. After this they remain at the same length, till St. Andrew's day, the 25th, when they increase again to one previous month, a fortunate proof that the sun has turned but two months back. On the 24th it is at its nearest to the summer solstice.

